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# extended attributes

Phoenix OS/2 Society

The magazine of the OS/2 community

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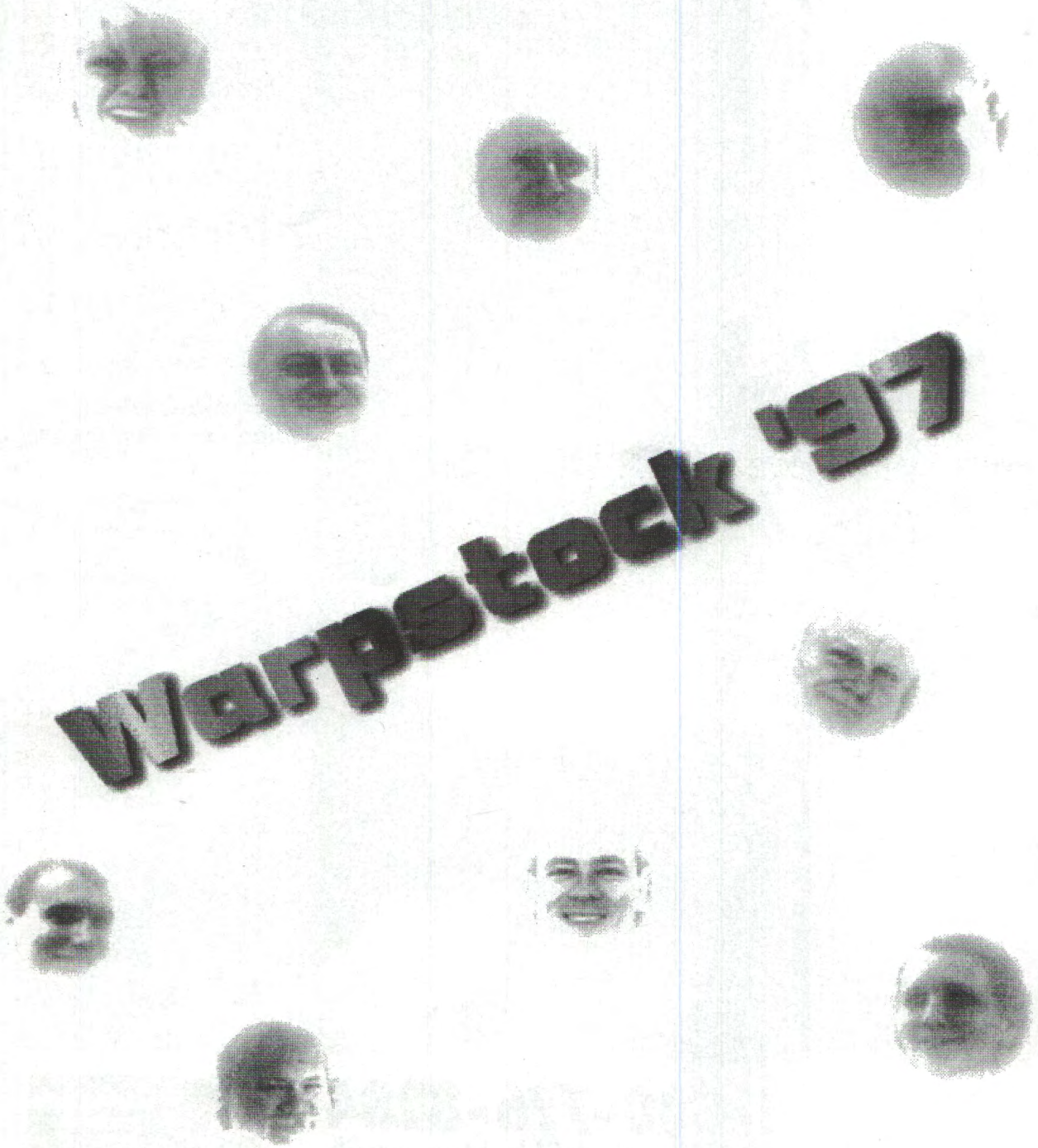

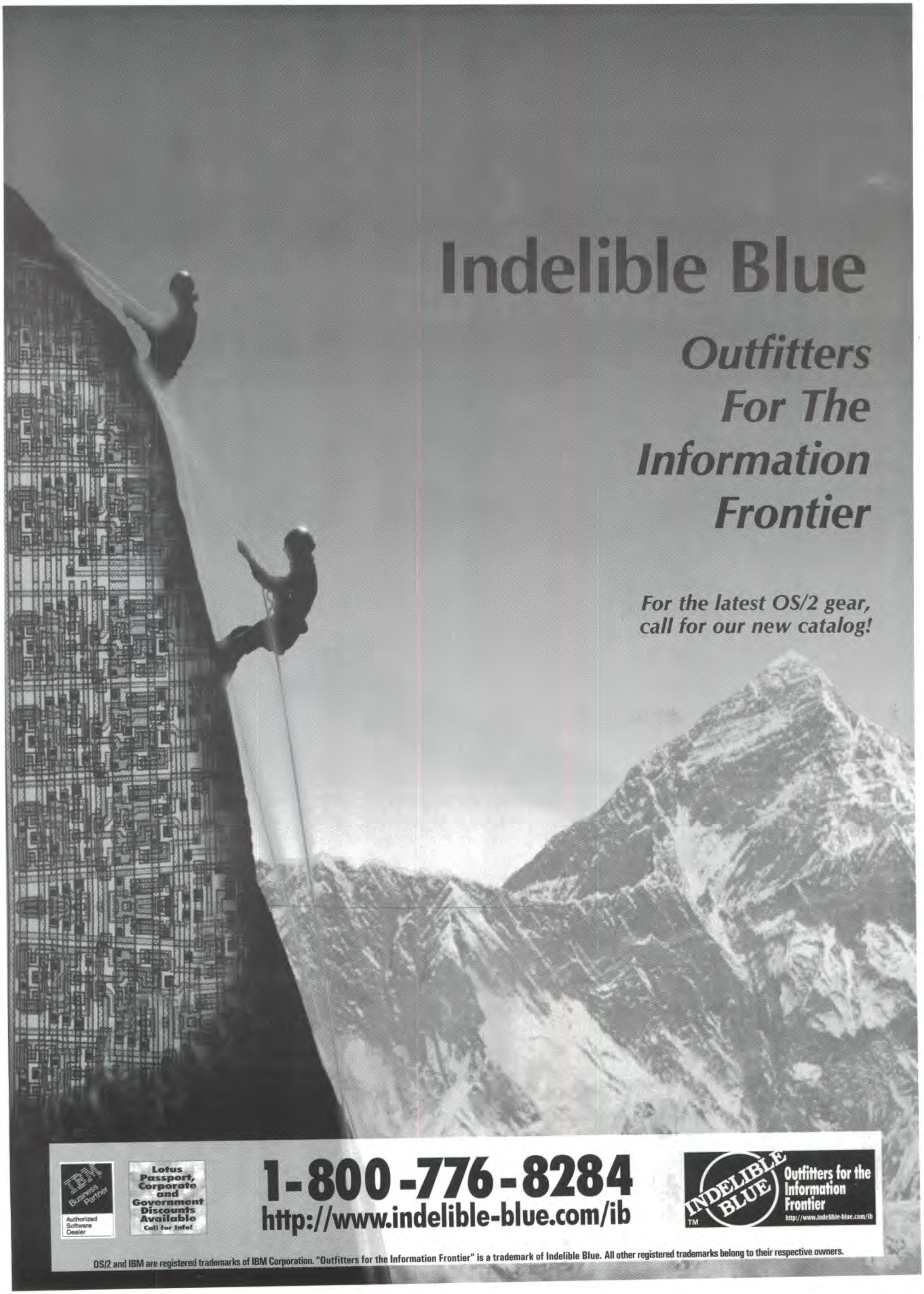
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*keyphrases*

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## extended attributes


*extended attributes* is the award winning monthly magazine of the Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc.

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# We're ba-ack!

*by Bill Schindler, editor-in-chief*

This last year has been a bumpy ride for many OS/2 users.

IBM sent lots of mixed signals when it did their Java, excuse me, Warp 4 roll out a year ago. Those signals took on a certain clarity at the September meeting of the Society. At that meeting, many Society members heard Mike Lawrie's message to OS/2 users as: Please go away.

Those of us at the core of the Society feared the worst. But instead of leaving, people *joined* the Society in response to Lawrie's message!

With a little bit of hindsight, we probably shouldn't have been surprised by that. As OS/2 users, we're not much like the average computer user. We demand stability, quality, and useability in our software. We're interested in software that works before we're interested in being just like the other guy. And we get pretty feisty when someone suggests that we should use a lesser product.

We're not sheep and anybody who wants to lead us to the slaughter is buying into trouble. A *lot* of trouble.

## Warpstock

It would be almost impossible to come up with too many superlatives to describe Warpstock '97.

The Warpstock committee and the Southern California OS/2 User Group (SCOUG) did an extremely professional job of organizing and running Warpstock. The attendance forecasts were blown away. The vendors in attendance were practically overwhelmed with sales. Every one of the sessions that I looked in on were packed. And everywhere I looked, there were smiles. (Just take a look at all of the smiling faces on the cover!)

Perhaps the most important aspect of Warpstock is that everybody came away feeling upbeat, happy, and hopeful. A month later, the upbeat attitude appears to still be hanging on.

Because it was such an important event for the OS/2 community, this issue of extended attributes is dedicated to Warpstock. We're running more pictures than we've ever run in a single issue.

After a year of fighting to keep each issue from turning into a "downer" I must say I'm ecstatic to put together an issue that has lots of good news instead!

I'd like to personally thank Felix Cruz for championing the concept of Warpstock, all the members of the Warpstock committee for spending hours online coordinating and organizing the event, and a huge thank you to SCOUG for the tremendous amount of work they put into the actual event.

So now, after a rather rocky year, we can end on a high note. And for all those who've said that OS/2 is dead:

We're back!


# Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc

The Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc (POSSI) is an organization of computer users with an interest in IBM's OS/2 operating system.

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*.on the bitstream*

# If it ain't broke, break it

*by Esther Schindler*

When I grew up in the 1960's, the typical family bought a car every few years. They had to; by 60,000 miles, most American cars required an engine overhaul, a new transmission, or other expensive repairs. The new models rarely offered significant enhancements, but it was cheaper to buy a new car than to it was pay a mechanic indefinitely. (I recall my mother muttering about her paying the mechanic's daughter's orthodontia bill.)

The Japanese invasion changed the auto market. Japanese cars offered reliability and better gas mileage, though at a higher initial cost. As a result, the American auto industry went into a nose dive from which it took years to recover. Fortunately, it did so with grace and with customer interests (if not financial survival) in mind. Nowadays, cars are sold with three-year warranties and the promise that you won't need a tune-up for 100,000 miles.

These days, few people trade in the car every two years, rarely by necessity. My 1991 Honda Prelude has 83,000 miles on it, and it's only beginning to require occasional (and comparatively inexpensive) attention.

In contrast, I have purchased at least three—or is it four?—new computers since 1991. I have changed my operating system, or its version, five times. Is this healthy?

Esther Schindler is program chair of the Phoenix OS/2 Society. She just accepted a staff position at Ziff Davis, where she'll be Technology Editor for *Sm@rt Reseller* magazine. You can reach her at esther@bitranch.com.

## Software with tail fins

Just as we had a constant pressure to "trade in" the car in the 1960s, the computer industry expects users to upgrade to the latest-and-greatest at every opportunity. While plenty of people drag their feet (Windows 3.1 is still used in most offices), the implication is that such users are behind the times, driving a '61 Chevy when all their friends are driving the '67 model. Though software doesn't wear out, at least not in the manner that cars do, you're expected to purchase the newest version because of at least one compelling new feature.

This isn't a new phenomenon. If I recall correctly, Stan Kelly-Bootle's *Devil's DP Dictionary*, written in 1981, referred to the behavior as "creeping featurism," the notion that programmers will keep adding functionality until the code is forcibly ripped from their hands. Back then, the behavior was considered a problem. Nowadays, it's encouraged.

That's because the financial model for most software companies is to make money on the upgrades. They get you "hooked" on one version, on which they make little profit. But once you've committed your financial records to a given accounting application, or written your newsletter using a single word processor, they know that you're a captive audience. Thus, the software companies need to come out with upgrades on a regular basis, or they simply can't stay in business.

That works fine, when the software is relatively new. With any decent application, upgrading from version 1 to version 2 is a no-brainer, and almost everyone wants the cool stuff that finally made it into version 3. But there's a law of diminishing returns. Does my accounting program really need Internet access? Does the DTP package require a massive user interface overhaul, or is the current one serviceable and adequate?

The constant drive to add more features (so the customers see an improvement worth paying for) has led us to software that takes 150 MB to install, a week of training, and a consultant to maintain. Weren't computers supposed to simplify our lives instead of replacing them?

I could live with that. In fact, I do. Despite my role as professional software reviewer, with free access to every OS/2 application ever made, my personal accounting is administered with an ancient (1992) copy of Quicken for DOS, and my business runs on 1992-era NewViews Accounting. It works. Changing to something else would take more time than I have to invest, with a dubious payoff. I have better things to do with my time, not the least of which is write about the new applications the industry expects you to buy!

## Not-so-great expectations

What troubles me is that the entire computer industry is built around *products that don't work*. If the hardware or software worked correctly, and was truly easy to use, most of the computer industry would be unnecessary. It would be in danger of as major a collapse as the auto industry faced perhaps worse.

In marketing technical products, a key concept (well explained in Geoffrey Moore's *Crossing the Chasm* and *Inside the Tornado*, books I heartily recommend) is the *whole product*. Mainstream buyers, whether for televisions, cars, or operating systems, want to purchase solutions rather than products. A CD player is only worthwhile if you can buy CDs that will play on it. A lawn mower is unacceptable unless you can buy parts and service. Software is only acceptable (i.e. mainstream) when you can purchase training, books, add-on applications, training, and magazines (or at least magazine articles) on the topic.

[Incidentally, this is one of IBM's major weaknesses in regard to marketing OS/2. They never understood the requirement of building a whole product around OS/2. IBM was so used to being the dominant feature in the landscape, around which other businesses centered themselves, that the company never thought to encourage others to create training, books, and all the rest. IBM provided some of this themselves, such as training and Red Books, and shortsightedly imagined that doing so enabled them to make more money. They never learned to position OS/2 so that a significant percentage of the computer industry became dependent on OS/2's success—and thus had a vested interest in promoting and supporting it. Unfortunately, IBM has demonstrated no sign that they've seen the error of their ways.]

In the 1960s, the majority of auto dealerships' income came from the Service department. Nowadays, software companies earn most of their money from upgrades. Training companies pay the bills by teaching people how to use complex software systems. Books are written about topics that are difficult for novices to understand.

For every one of these businesses, "perfect" solutions hurt their businesses. If it's easy to use, customers don't need training. If it doesn't break, they don't need consulting. If it works out of the box, they don't need custom programming. Note that there are no shag carpet user groups, no training sessions on how to "get the most out of your refrigerator," and no *Canon Photocopier 6.0 for Dummies* (though on the latter I expect it's only a matter of time).

## Business decisions

Imagine a computer reseller or consultant whose customer asks for advice on which operating system strategy to follow. The reseller can recommend OS/2, UNIX, Windows 95, or Windows NT. With an OS/2 or UNIX sale, the reseller will get paid for the software (which makes very little money directly), for the initial installation, and perhaps for customer training. A Windows sale will enable the reseller to earn money for all the above plus a hefty amount for the inevitable consulting bill as he tries to get Windows 95 or Windows NT to work correctly. The OS/2 user (who is apt to be more technically savvy already and thus needs less—billable—assistance) wanders off into the distance and rarely needs support. The Windows user requires hand-holding.

The reseller is in business to make money. Which solution do you think he will recommend?

My concern is, as always, for the end user. You first bought a computer because you thought that it would enhance the quality of your life. It would let you get more done, faster, with better record keeping. If it needs as much attention as a 1962 Rambler station wagon with 120,000 miles, has it really made your life better? The person who sells you computer-related solutions has a vested interest, in the short term, in recommending answers that make money for his business at the expense of yours.

The best computer consultants and resellers, of course, ignore this "rule" because they know that their long-term success is based on making happy customers. Happy customers are those who got "a good answer" from their advisor, and the smart consultant or reseller makes sure the customer knows he's happy.

But it's impossible to tell the good from the bad, especially when the customer isn't an expert in the product area. And if he were that knowledgeable about the computer system being purchased, there's a good chance that he'd be buying mail-order.

## Fixing the price

I'm not sure how the computer industry can address this problem, but I'm sure that the solution involves a move towards retainers and fixed price solutions.

If a consultant gets paid $60/hour to make your network run, he makes money only if it doesn't run. While few are unethical enough to sabotage a system, they certainly prefer to support a (mainstream) network that needs baby-sitting, at the expense of a less-known solution (thus harder to sell) that only needs dusting, now and again. If the same consultant is paid a monthly fee to "fix any problems that come up," it's to his advantage to ensure that no problems occur, so the retainer is pure profit.

This sounds like a great answer, but I don't know how well it could work in practice. I spoke with a consultant recently about his client's old Novell Netware network, which had run without a shutdown for 763 days. His company lost the client, though, when another reseller recommended that the client move to Windows NT Server. The switch was made, and the client's network has never worked right since. Yet, because the client sees the new reseller at his office, he imagines that he's getting his money's worth.

It's as if such clients owned car insurance, and get in an accident every couple of years to "get their money's worth." I don't understand the behavior, but it seems to be the way things work.

## What now?

I like to end my columns with nice, neat solutions, or at least with closure. I don't have an easy answer, this time. I'd like to have one. I see this issue as a major weakness in the foundation of the computer industry, because novice users, who have heard the promises of "a computer can make your life better!" get burnt when those promises are broken. Unhappy customers—of an industry as well as a company—stay away in droves.

Unfortunately, my ability to predict the future is vague. I'd be particularly interested to learn about any solutions you've come up with.

*press release*

# Mesa 2 Version 2.2 prerelease is available

Sundial Systems has made version 2.2 PreRelease of the Mesa 2 spreadsheet available to the public. The product has already been through a very intense period of beta testing and is now ready for the gamma "shake down."

The list of new features is long and impressive. Here's some of what's new in version 2.2:

- Customizable and movable toolbars.
- Customizable menus.
- Customizable accelerators.
- Smart Freeze for row and column locking. It's title locking plus more.
- New smaller and more capable file format.
- Printing enhancements including fit-to-page, centering on page, printing just a graph, printing the entire workbook, and preventing printing of graphics.
- Enhanced graphs.
- Cell notes/attachments.
- Page comments.
- Numerous REXX Enhancements.
- Over 30 new MScript functions.
- Microsoft Excel XLS version 5.0, 95, and 97 file import for files up to 7 megabytes in size.
- Autoformat ranges.
- Image support. Metafiles can be used as an image frame, a background image for a layer, or as an image for pictogram bars on bar/column graphs.
- New functions including AVEDEV, DEVSQ, MEDIAN, INTERCEPT, and TREND.
- Drag and Drop printing from the workbook system menu and layer selector.
- Increased spreadsheet size with layers up to 99,999 rows.
- File templates.
- Expanded export options for a range including to an HTML table, Rich Text Format, delimited text file, bitmap, or OS/2 Metafile.
- Seamless file compression.
- File type Extended Attributes to remove all dependencies on the file extension.

Mesa 2 is definitely a full featured spreadsheet. It conforms to traditional spreadsheets in terms of general layout, available features, and fundamental behavior. But, Mesa 2 is better because it makes the most of OS/2's advanced capabilities. Unique tools for performing tasks such as drag-and-drop ranges, SmartFill, Formula Inheritance, and REXX scripts make Mesa 2 stand out.

The Mesa 2 PreRelease of version 2.2 can be downloaded from the Sundial Systems Web site at `www.sundialsystems.com` and feedback on the PreRelease is appreciated. The gamma cycle for version 2.2 is expected to last for 6 to 8 weeks. Information about pricing and upgrade options is not yet available.


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*.two warped*

# Get prepared for Warpstock '98!

*by Judy McDermott*

Warpstock '97 was a phenomenal, unexpected success! Now it's time to start planning for Warpstock '98.

There have been articles, email, and newsgroup postings about Warpstock, so I'll summarize and use some of the excerpts from those that were unable to attend. By the time you read this, maybe the location of Warpstock '98 will have been decided upon.

## Ready, Set, GO....

I arrived Friday evening and went directly to the Warpstock conference site. It was about 8:30 p.m. and much to my surprise, setup was almost complete. Volunteers were everywhere! Even people that hadn't signed up to help were right there pitching in. SCOUG was the local host of the Warpstock conference and were kind enough to provide pizza and soda for the tired and hungry people that helped with the setup. A few of the vendors also arrived so that they could setup and be prepared (or so they thought) for the Saturday morning debut of Warpstock '97.

The registration line extends out the door.

## Showtime

The Warpstock Steering Committee started the day at 7:00am so that we could assure that everything was in place when the attendees arrived. We opened the doors at 8:00am to the public and what a surprise. They were lined up outside the door!

I must say, I was impressed by the general attitude. Not once did I hear anyone complain about having to wait. They seemed to be content chatting with other OS/2 users and were very patient.

## Who was there?

People came from near and far. There was close to 400 attendees. Registrations were still being taken at 4 p.m. Saturday. There were some new faces on Sunday. Registration closed at 1:30pm Sunday as there was hardly enough time left to charge for admission.

There were people from as far away as Portugal, Argentina, Australia, Germany, and Canada. As near as Los Angeles CA. From the information that I have, there were attendees from twenty-one U.S. states.

## They speak out

The vendors were unprepared for the number of attendees that showed up—and they were the first to admit it.

Some ran out of software, fliers, and even credit card slips the first day. They ended up taking orders. One vendor said that this was the first time that they didn't have to *sell*. People walked up to their booth and said, "Show me your product."

Here's some input I collected. (In some cases I had to leave out parts to conserve space.)

**Gene Barlow, PowerQuest**: "The idea for Warpstock was born several years ago as a way to get all of the OS/2 enthusiasts together to share their ideas. Janet Gobeille and Esther Schindler were participants in this early discussion with me. I submitted a budget request to IBM to fund this event, but could not get the funding to move forward with it. So, it was exciting to see that the OS/2 users themselves were able to make this dream come to being.

"I was pleased to be a part of this first Warpstock event representing PowerQuest Corporation. The meeting location was ideal, and the attendance was great for this first event. I did not get to attend any of the presentations as I needed to attend to my booth, but the attendees seemed to come out of the events happy and enthusiastic about what they had seen. I was very impressed with the OS/2 history museum that the Southern California OS/2 user group pulled together. It brought back fond memories of the early days of OS/2. I look forward to attending future Warpstock events and will certainly try to support them as a vendor. Our thanks to all that made this event successful."

**Timur Tabi**: "Like everyone else, I thought it was an outstanding success. I'm very pleased that so many people showed up. I really enjoyed all the positive feedback that I got during my presentations and at our booth. In fact, it was better than ColoradOS/2, because there was no foreboding sense of doom hanging overhead.

"My only regret is that we were not prepared well enough. We only had one simple flyer to hand out, and our web site is still missing lots of information. But at least we got to talk to lots of interested people, and we got lots of good feedback to help us with our development.

"If you thought we had an impressive booth this year, with all of our multimedia presentations, wait until next year!"

**Will Trosky, Aviar**: "Warpstock has refreshed my belief in OS/2 and its users. It is easy to wonder about OS/2's future, but with an event like Warpstock and the tremendous sup-

Brad Wardell of Stardock, demoing software.

Dick Krueger and Mike Briggs setting up the POSSI booth.

port OS/2 receives from its users my faith in OS/2 is rejuvenated."

**John Urbaniak, Aviar**: "We were very encouraged by Warpstock 97. Frankly, we expected a handful of OS/2 diehards expressing doom and gloom. Instead we found 400 smiling, enthusiastic OS/2 lovers from all over the world. The good vibes were contagious.

"We can't compliment the Warpstock Steering Committee enough. They did a great job. So did our hosts, the Southern California OS/2 User Group (SCOUG)."

**Dick Goran**: "I was pleased to have to opportunity to conduct a session on Advanced REXX on OS/2 at Warpstock '97. I have not seen the official attendance figures; however, I was pleasantly surprised at the turnout.

"Our *REXX Reference Summary Handbook* was a popular attraction. The attendees purchased all of the copies I had brought with me."

**Armin Schwartz, OS/2 developer**: "It has given me a lot of encouragement to continue my pro-

A small part of the OS/2 Museum.


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gram development for OS/2. I hope there will be a second Warpstock next year and I will seriously consider having my own vendor stand at that one."

**Timothy F. Sipples, IBM Personal Software**: "I could see Warpstock becoming a useful mechanism for prodding IBM on certain issues (much like SHARE and COMMON do for other IBM platforms), such as feature requests and marketing plans. Perhaps a session called 'IBM Problem Solving' would be a good forum for that sort of thing. (There was a lot of grousing about what IBM is or isn't doing, but it was random. Let's see if we can't make that more organized and constructive, and get IBM to move on certain issues.)"

**John Ratti, OS/2 user**: "I heard from the IBM'ers that they were impressed with how professional and organized Warpstock was. Looks like everyone was happy!"

Esther Schindler and Judy McDermott confer while Tom Nadeau looks on.

**Virginia Hetrick, speaker**: "The really good thing about Warpstock is that it was like going to camp with a bunch of your buddies and focussing on your favorite operating system while you were at camp. I would like to have seen more participation from people who troubleshoot problems for IBM (not marketing dudes), but I would not like to have them 'taking over.'"

Paul Hethmon welcomes Warpstock attendees on Saturday

Rollin White at Sundial's booth

**Brad Wardell, speaker, and representing Stardock Systems**: "Anyone who thought the OS/2 SOHO market was 'dead' merely had to be at Warpstock last weekend to discover that the market is not only alive and well, but thriving."

Brad's complete article can be found at `www.stardock.com/warpstock.html`.

**Carlos, OS/2 user and IBM employee**: "I flew all the way from Mexico. I work for IBM but I covered all my expenses. I was really impressed with the result of Warpstock. People from Denmark, Argentina, Australia, and (me) from Mexico came to Warpstock just to show the world Warp is Alive, growing, and in good shape.

"Sometimes I felt IBM's absence of commitment was a key point; IBM made me angry when I saw they send OS/2 Warp Version 3 to the raffle. The users love and will continue supporting OS/2 even against IBM.

"Lotus gave out 100 copies of the alpha version of Lotus SmartSuite for Warp 4. That was very impressive and kind of helpful.

"I was very happy with Warpstock. Even though I was only one day, I saw more than I imagined. I can guess that the next Warpstock will be awesome."

"(*Disclaimer*: All are my opinions. I don't mind what IBM or anybody else can think about it.)"

## For your listening pleasure

The Saturday night social event which featured Stan Ruffo and Martin Pugh's blues band was enjoyed by many.

During the break our very own Esther Schindler raffled off the many prizes that were contributed by vendors. To be enjoyed by all were the two large OS/2 Tenth birthday cakes provided by IBM, veggie trays, and munchies.

## My two cents

I felt it was a total success. I was asked by Esther Schindler to assume the role of the Volunteer Chair and very pleased that I was a part of the "Team." It certainly took a lot of time but was well worth it. I was too busy to attend any of the sessions

Harry Martin shows off his special Warpstock shirts

but understand that they were well presented and there was good audience participation. I think my greatest pleasure was meeting the many people that I have become acquainted with *virtually*; I can now put a face to a name, and having the opportunity to just talk about OS/2 with people who understood what I was talking about.

Timur Tabi shows off some cool MIDI and graphics.

I can't even express my gratitude to the folks whose volunteer efforts made Warpstock a success. They showed enthusiasm and above all, put up with me virtually for many months and then onsite. Even people that hadn't volunteered were pitching in when needed.

Pictures from the event can be seen on the POSSI homepage and the Warpstock homepage, www.warpstock.org.

### POSSI grows

The POSSI booth was quite busy. For those that haven't heard, we gained more than fifty new members at Warpstock. That brings our membership above 500!

They ran out of credit card slips and had to obtain some from the Warpstock registration table. I was so pleased to be able to get my POSSI t-shirt and it was even my size. The copies of extended attributes sold very well and as it should be, it's one of the few hardcopy OS/2 magazines left out there. I was very pleased to meet some of the POSSI members. Maybe someday I'll make it to a meeting.

Bill Schindler looking through digital photos.

*press release*

## Stardock.net free online gaming service

Stardock Systems, Inc. announced Stardock.net, an on-line gaming service that allows users, from within a Stardock game, to play other gamers from around the world.

The first game to use Stardock.net is Entrepreneur, Stardocks recently released real-time strategy game. In Entrepreneur, players assume the role of a computer giant and must conquer the world ruthlessly by researching new technology and devastating marketing campaigns. Owners of Entrepreneur simply click on the Stardock.net button on its main menu while logged onto the Internet and are taken to Stardock.net's Entrepreneur lobby where people can chat and join Entrepreneur games with other people. The service supports a hall of fame and a ranking system that lets people know who the top players are.

The next beta version of Stellar Frontier will also be supported by Stardock.net. Stellar Frontier, a game that plays as a cross between Star Control and Ultima On-Line, will automatically list all servers created on Stardock.net. Players will be able to warp to other star systems which are controlled by a server listed on Stardock.net. This way, players are not solely dependent on Stardock having to create servers for gamers to play Stellar Frontier on.

Stardock intends to expand its service to include its business solution products, such as Object Desktop for Windows, which is currently in beta. Users, even in beta, can connect to the Object Desktop Network (which resides on Stardock.net) and update the pieces of Object Desktop they wish to enhance.

A free chat client to Stardock.net is expected in December. Stardock.net is free with any Stardock product that supports it. To celebrate its release, Stardock will be holding an Entrepreneur gaming tournament on Friday, November 21 on Stardock.net. The player whose three top scores sums up to the highest will win any two Stardock products of their choice (including pre-orders of Stardocks upcoming Galactic Civilizations v3). Second and third prize will be the choice of any single Stardock product. The contest will begin that Friday at 5:00pm EST and end at midnight.

More information can be found at `www.stardock.net` or on Stardocks home Web site `www.stardock.com`.

Stardock can be reached at 313-762-0687, Fax 313-762-0690, `info@stardock.com`.

# Reflection

*by Lee F Baldwin*

By the time you read this the elections for POSSI will be over, and the new board will have been elected. The board will have selected a pride of officers—or is that a gaggle of officers? It's time to thank not only the past board and officers, but also the individuals who stood up and volunteered to run for the new board and those who will be the new officers.

Some of us will be elected and some of us won't. But that does not diminish my appreciation for those who ran, for those willing to serve.

## Warpstock success

My understanding is that we had a very successful showing at Warpstock. We collected something like 50 new memberships. We pretty much sold out of the shirts, including the ones I personally committed to purchasing if they didn't sell.

While I am on the subject of "What Happened," let me comment on this last year! Most of you have joined in this last year. The editor of *extended attributes* could come up with better statistics, but I recall only about 150 of us around, this time last year. Now we are closer to 500. The reality is that I probably will never get to meet most of you except online.

Where have the new members come from? Well, one of the things we did in the last year was the now infamous mailing of 10,000 copies of the magazine to *OS/2 Magazine* subscribers. This has, amazingly, produced a steady flow of memberships ever since. The OS/2 Marketplace Conference, (whose committee is often referred to as the "Food SIG"), took place and picked up a few members. The user group's Web site, `www.possi.org`, has continued to supply a steady stream of new members.

What is obvious from all of the new memberships is that there is a need and a requirement for what POSSI is doing. I expect that this group will continue to grow, and that the new board and officers will do their best to give you the best group possible.

# No OS/2 Marketplace conference in 1998

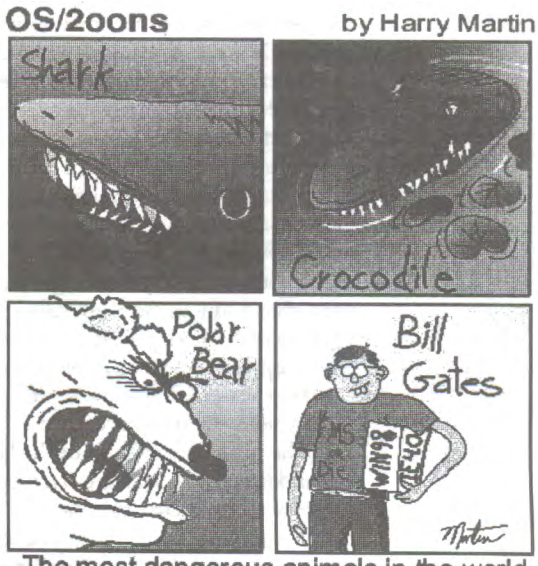
*by Robert Rosenwald*

The OS/2 Marketplace committee has decided to not put on a 1998 OS/2 Marketplace conference. The committee, mainly comprised of Rosey, Bill, Esther, Dick, Burke, Craig, Joel, Lee, and Mike felt that the subject matter of the conference no longer had the same importance than when we did the 1997 conference. The tremendous success of Warpstock convinced us that there are far more important matters to which to direct our energies, and we left open the possibility of hosting Warpstock in 1999.

The consensus was that, while clearly IBM would just as soon individual users go away, there is still no better environment in which to get work done. OS/2 will likely continue to be the main platform for most of us but growth of the marketplace seems unlikely at this point. Therefore, it's not worth the effort of organizing such a special purpose conference. A great deal of work is yet to be done in helping users take ever greater advantage of OS/2 and harnessing its power—and we felt it more important to direct our energies for the next year in that direction.

See what OS/2 User Group SCOUG has to say about InfoOnCall :

www.InfoOnCall.com



*December meeting*

# Smack! yourself at December meeting

*by Esther Schindler*

Although the software has been in development quietly for quite a while, Phoenix-based Perfect Niche Software just announced its first OS/2 application: *Smack!*, the first general purpose labeling program for OS/2. *Smack!*, available November 30 for $69.95, uses desktop publishing-like functionality to produce a wide variety of labels, including those for mailings, diskettes, name badges, business cards, inserts, and dividers.

*Smack!* was first demonstrated at Warpstock. Now it's time to show off to members of the Phoenix OS/2 Society at the general meeting on Tuesday, December 9. This may be seem like a "family affair," since the software was written by Bill Schindler, is marketed Perfect Niche (owned by Society member Robert Rosenwald), and technical support is provided by Mike Briggs. I suppose this is simply a sign of what the OS/2 community can accomplish by working together.

## About Smack!

*Smack!* provides a comprehensive set of templates, flexible printing options, and easy-to-use data manipulation capabilities.

*Smack!* was designed from the ground up as an OS/2 labeling program. It is WPS aware, multi-threaded, and REXX enabled. *Smack!* fully supports drag-and-drop and includes such advanced features as shadowing labels, full rotation of all objects including text, graphics, and drawn objects, and has unlimited undo and redo. Other features include merge-printing, import and export, sequential numbering, and complete printing controls.

*Smack!* is a simple, cost-effective way for you to get the professional-looking labels you need for mailings, diskettes, name badges, business cards, inserts, dividers, and more.

With *Smack!* you get the functionality of a desktop publishing system and the power of OS/2. That means you can design and print great-looking labels at warp speed.

Using the power of OS/2 *Smack!* was designed to take advantage of the best PC operating system available today.

*Smack!* gives you the flexibility of a mini-desktop publishing system just for labels, including:

- Comprehensive set of templates
- Rulers for US and international
- Text (multiple fonts)
- Graphics (OS/2 .bmp or .tif)
- Drawing tools include line, rectangle, ellipse

With *Smack!* you can move layers and objects as well as align and rotate text and objects. Don't worry if you change your mind or make a mistake, you have the option of undoing or redoing all changes made since the last save. Once you finish a custom design, you can store the layout for future use.

## Manipulating data

With Smack! manipulating data is easy. You can:

- Import, export
- Merge-print
- Collate
- Assign sequential numbering
- Print barcodes

Once you've designed your labels, you can preview by page or label, *Smack!* supports laser, inkjet, or dot matrix printers, with flexible print options, including:

- Current page, range, all
- Multiple copies
- Horizontal or vertical
- Selected labels

## About Perfect Niche

Located in Scottsdale, Arizona, Perfect Niche Software is the developer of the CRADOC CaptionWriter, the world's best selling slide labeling program and the Photo Management System, a simple database for organizing data for photographers. The company has supplied Macintosh, Windows, and DOS labeling software for the photography industry for the past twelve years.

## When and where

The general meeting is held on Tuesday, December 9, at 7:00pm at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1831 East Dunlap. The Q&A session begins at 6:30pm. We're sure to convene at Coyote Springs afterwards, as Rosey, Bill, and Mike *Smack!* each other on the back.

### General meeting

**what**

▲ Perfect Niche showing the Smack! label program

**where**

▲ Mountain Preserve Reception Center
1431 E Dunlap
Phoenix, Arizona

**when**

▲ Tuesday, December 9, 1997
▲ 6:30pm: Q & A session
▲ 7:00pm: Regular meeting

# Coming events

This is a list of events scheduled by the Phoenix OS/2 Society. Unless otherwise noted, active members may attend any scheduled event for free.

## Meeting notes

For the latest updates on the Society's event calendar, check the Web site at `http://www.possi.org`.

For meeting information and other queries, call the Phoenix OS/2 Society's voice mail at 602-949-4341.

If you have suggestions, ideas, or comments on the content of general meetings, contact the Society's Program Chair, Esther Schindler, at the general meetings or send email to `esther@bitranch.com`.

**November**

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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| 30 | | | | | | |

**December**

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| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

**January**

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| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

## December 1997

**2** net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

**2** Developer's SIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Lyle Wilson. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

**5** Magazine submission deadline for January issue. Articles should be sent to `editor@possi.org`. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

**9** HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Coordinators Rosey Rosenwald and Stan Kropen. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**9** General meeting; Perfect Niche showing the Smack! label program. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**20** Board meeting and magazine prep. Meeting is 10:00am to 1:00pm. Eat a brunch, learn about the inner workings of the Society, and help get extended attributes ready to mail. Location: Bill and Esther Schindler's house in north Scottsdale.

## January 1998

**5** Magazine submission deadline for February issue. Articles should be sent to `editor@possi.org`. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

**6** net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

**6** Developer's SIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Lyle Wilson. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

**13** HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Coordinators Rosey Rosenwald and Stan Kropen. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**13** General meeting. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**24** Board meeting and magazine prep.

## February 1998

**3** net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

**3** LAN SIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Elliot Abramowitz. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

**5** Magazine submission deadline for March issue. Articles should be sent to `editor@possi.org`. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

**10** HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Coordinators Rosey Rosenwald and Stan Kropen. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**10** General meeting. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**28** Board meeting and magazine prep.

## March 1998

**5** Magazine submission deadline for April issue. Articles should be send to `editor@possi.org`. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

**3** net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

**3** Developer's SIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Lyle Wilson. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

**5** Magazine submission deadline for January issue. Articles should be sent to `editor@possi.org`. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

**10** HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Coordinators Rosey Rosenwald and Stan Kropen. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**10** General meeting; Perfect Niche showing the Smack! label program. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

**28** Board meeting and magazine prep.

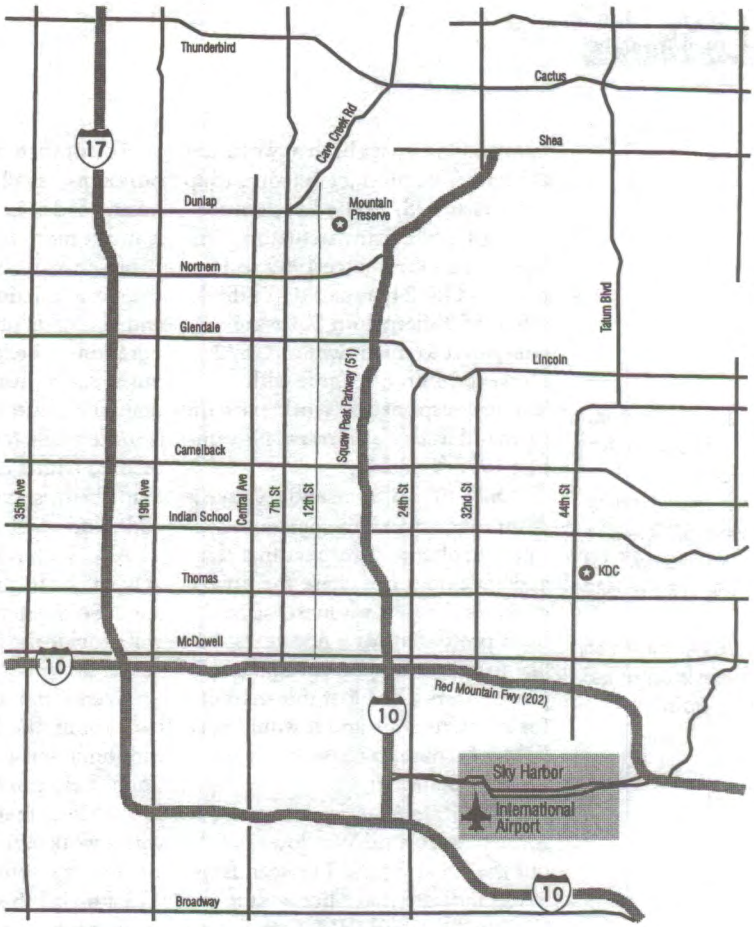
# Meeting locations

General meetings are held at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

From the Black Canyon, exit at Dunlap and head east. From the Squaw Peak, exit at Northern. Go west to 12th Street, turn right and go north to Dunlap, turn right, and it's two blocks up on the right.

The "How OS/2 Works General Interest Group" now meets at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center on the afternoon of the general meeting.

The Internet SIG, Developer's SIG, and LAN SIG all meet at Knowledge Development Center, 2999 N 44th St, Suite 400. That's just north of Thomas, in the building with the green dome. Plenty of free parking space is available in the garage behind the building.




If the mailing label on the back cover says "sample," then this may be the only copy of *extended attributes* that you will ever receive. If you want to keep getting the magazine (and receive all the other benefits of membership), you must join! A 12 month membership in the US is only $30. (See the form for membership pricing in other areas.) Tear out the application form, fill it in, and mail it with the membership fee to the Society's address.

*.sigs*
# SIG news

## .net.SIG

*by Mike Briggs <mike@possi.org>*

The November net.sig was well attended; that may have been helped by the fact that the Developer's SIG had no meeting room and joined us. The more the merrier.

In a way this worked out well, since we had a guest speaker. Kyle Rosenthal, of COX Cable, gave us the rundown on the latest here in Phoenix about cable modems. High-speed Internet access is becoming available here in town, and we got an update on locations and pricing. Check out COX's Phoenix page at `www.phx.cox.com` for more details and availability.

A couple of the websites we visited near the end of the meeting were the Oscar Mayer site for "An Interactive History of the Wienermobile" at `www.oscarmayer.com/wienermobile/history.html`. We also visited the Powerball page to see if we won millions at `www.musl.com/scripts/html.pl?powerball.ptm` and the Internic Whois page to check domain name registration at `http://rs.internic.net/cgi-bin/whois`.

## HOW GIG

*by Robert Rosenwald*

The HOW GIG (How OS/2 Works General Interest Group) met on Wednesday just prior to the general meeting. The subject matter was "Creating a Maintenance Partition" and the topics covered included the use of FDISK, using Partition Magic to create a partition, installing Boot Manager, and using BootOS2 and FDISKPM to make the partition bootable and add it to Boot Manager's menu.

The next meeting of the HOW GIG will be December 9 at 3:30pm.

## Developers SIG

The Developers SIG will meet in December in place of the LAN SIG. The meeting will be at 6:00pm on December 2.

# type Letters

Letters to the editor should be sent to editor@possi.org, or mailed to:
Editor, extended attributes
Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc
5515 N 7th St, Ste 5-133
Phoenix, AZ 85014-2585

We reserve the right to edit all letters for content, readability, and length.

I am an OS/2 user both at work and at home. The product that my group ships is an OS/2 based system for testing flight control actuators. We have used OS/2 since 1989 so I have an OS/2 bias and don't think much of "Microsloth Software" as compared to the power of OS/2. However, I do not agree with Esther's response to WorkSpace on Demand in *on the bitstream*, November, 1997. Consider:

Only 40% of households have a computer, and a large percent use it to play Solitaire. I suspect that this audience does not chase the power curve as the percent increase has been pretty flat for a few years. I'd like to know the percent that are power users. IBM lost this market for many reasons and it would cost IBM a fortune to chase it.

Let Bill have it.

Corporate America is moving at some pace toward Windows NT, but the latest figures I've seen from VARs indicate that Microsoft is in trouble there, and IBM is starting to look good. This is significant if we're chasing the small and medium size businesses. (See the latest issue of *VAR News* for more details.)

It costs money to maintain a workstation in a network. If those costs can be reduced by even 25% Corporate America will listen. I believe the network centric model and Java is inherently less expensive than client/server.

My experience with small business is that the owner really does not want to make a career out of taking care of the computer system. If the business is growing, the "computer system" is a network. Client/server networks are the most expensive to install and maintain, but make the most money for Bill. He sells more software, and VARs sell more software, hardware, and support than a server-centric system.

Most large retail Point of Sale systems are not client/server but reflect the "old" server-centric model. It is inexpensive and it works. This would make WSOD a less expensive alternative to client/server for the small and medium business.

To compete with the large corporations, small and medium size businesses need Internet access that is much more than a simple Web Browser or Web page. They need the same functionality that intranets and extranets provide to large corporations. I believe they'll need the business-to-business e-commerce that IBM is attempting to lead. This is more easily (cheaply) implemented with a client-centric model than client/server. Just write some code, and you'll realize the problem.

Also, I am not sure this functionality will be in shrink-wrap any time soon. So the network centric model will provide the functionality sooner and at lower cost than client/server.

Even if the server is local, in the back room, the NC makes more economic sense than the workstation. There can't be that many power users that will only be happy with a workstation so as to influence a major marketing strategy.

I am glad to see IBM developing an alternative to Microsoft and the client/server model. I will stay with OS/2 and Boot Manager unless I need a capability that is not available with this model. So far, that has not been the case. WSOD does not appear to change that. Bandwidth is obviously a problem, but client/server does not make the bandwidth issue go away. There are many technical and marketing advantages to the server-centric model. As a software developer for OS/2, having OS/2 in the middle of this battle provides opportunities. It actually implies that we have been correct about the power and flexibility of OS/2.

*Richard Rutkowski*

[*Author's response: I don't wonder whether small and medium sized businesses need or want WSOD. The question is: Does IBM have the ability and the desire to sell it to them? —ES*]

## Announcement or review?

I just read the November issue of extended attributes. Because I admire her, perhaps more than any other software reviewer, I'm a bit disappointed by Esther Schindler's article, "Input Queue." I would prefer a critical review, rather than a mere promotional announcement, of the software products listed. I don't doubt that the words per se were her own, and not taken verbatim from press releases—but the article nonetheless is merely an announcement and should be more clearly labeled as such.

This clear distinction to readers becomes especially important when we consider Esther's reputation as a thorough and fair-minded critic. Many readers might assume that she had installed and evaluated each program listed in the article. While (the lack of) such a distinction doesn't seem to matter much to many "news" reporters who confuse journalism with advertising, she knows better.

*Diane Gartner*

## Kill OS/2 Warp 3!

I think IBM should declare all copies of Red OS/2 Warp 3 (red spine, not communist!) illegal and unsupported, and take all copies off the market.

Seriously, I can't believe the number of messages complaining that "my new OS/2 Warp doesn't support this and that," yet they're running the November 94 release of Warp 3. I don't see how all the still-at-Warp 3 users can make sense to IBM from a business point of view, if they only spent $45 back in '94 and never again spent a dime on IBM software. An author in *PC Week* once wondered if the reason for OS/2's lack of huge success is that the product is so good that it doesn't force users to upgrade to the latest version—and hence fails to generate a continuos revenue stream. He said that many companies still have OS/2 2.1 installed and running and don't plan to upgrade.

IBM maintains and supports a development structure for these customers—yet this type of customer continues to demand free fixes, updates, and enhancements to three-year old code. In this context I think Software Choice is a good solution to this problem.

*Fernando Cassia*

.review

# Object REXX By Example

*by Christopher Pratt*

Christopher Pratt is the LAN Administrator at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, DC, and is an IBM Certified OS/2 Engineer. He can be reached at cdpratt@ibm.net.

Object REXX is based on REXX, which is easy to learn and use. REXX (and Object REXX) allows you to type in programs and get instant output—no worrying about compiling and recompiling your code. The language is also object oriented; that is, it uses (and reuses) component parts to build the program. So Object REXX offers you the best of both worlds—and it's definitely easier to learn than C++.

Best of all, Object REXX is free for OS/2 Warp users. It's included, automatically, with OS/2 Warp 4, and IBM made Object Rexx for OS/2 Warp 3 available for download for free from the Internet. Object REXX is also available on other platforms, but Windows users have to pay for their copy.

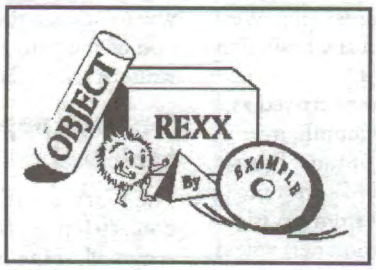
The writing style of *Object REXX by Example* is free-flowing and cute, though still technical. The authors treat the reader with respect and give thoughtful explanations. But most of all, they provide examples—over 130 of them. *Object REXX by Example* includes over 300 pages of examples, written in a non-threatening manner ready for you to start keying. And, unlike the OS/2 Warp 4 Object REXX reference (INF file), this book does not assume you already have object-oriented programming experience.

## Enter "twiddle"

Twiddle is an "OBJECT with an attitude and he's got CLASS." With passages like this, the Aviar team proves that computer books do not have to be as lifeless as IBM would have us believe. Found in sidebars pointing out helpful hints, Twiddle acts as the reader's guide throughout the book.

After reading a few pages, you will want to dive right in and start experimenting with the Object REXX examples. To do this, you'll need to make Object REXX the default REXX on the system, because OS/2 Warp 4 defaults to Classic REXX. Run the SWITCHRX command to change from Classic REXX to Object REXX.

These instructions are the one area of the book I found lacking. It was published prior to the packaging of Object REXX by IBM with OS/2. The information is a bit dated, referring only to the install procedures for Object REXX that were shipped on the Developer's Connection CD-ROMs. The book also shows its age by using the now defunct OpenDoc in one of its examples. (Since the computer industry moves very fast, it is often impossible to find up-to-the-minute information in print.)




This book stripped me of my fears of Object REXX and allowed me to build on my REXX programming experience. Until I read *Object REXX by Example*, I was unsure where this new REXX interpreter would leave me and (more importantly) my current Classic REXX programs. The writers reassure us that our current Classic REXX programs will continue to run, and they introduce object-oriented programming painlessly. Anyone who has wanted to explore the new programming power given to us by IBM (who is still supporting and developing Object REXX) but resisted giving up Classic REXX, should definitely buy this book. You will not be disappointed with *Object REXX by Example*.

*Object REXX by Example*

ISBN: 0-9652329-0-5, paperback, published by Aviar, Inc., 313 pages, can be purchased directly from Aviar, Inc.
219 Fingal Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15211
Tel: 412-488-9730
for $34.95 + S&H
Or from resellers like Indelible Blue, Inc., for $32.00 + S&H

Aviar, Inc. offers all of the examples in the book in electronic form to save all of that typing. They may be downloaded from their web page:
`www.oops-web.com/orxbyex`

Object REXX for OS/2 Warp 3 may be downloaded for free from IBM's web site:
`www2.hursley.ibm.com/orexx`

review

# Workhorse Library: Aesop's Fables

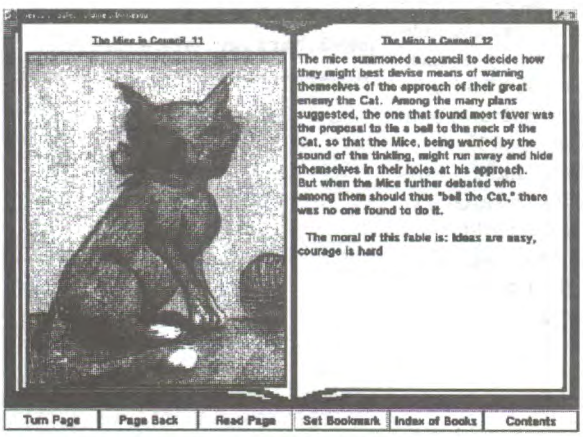
*by Jeff Shultz*

I have an 18-month old nephew. I also have a desire to eventually have children of my own (and Esther keeps trying to find someone for me). So it seemed natural for QVision's Workhorse Library: Aesop's Fables would catch my attention when I saw it being discussed in the comp.os.os2.* newsgroups. The fact that the software runs on OS/2 (which I use), Windows 95 (which my nephew's dad uses), plus Windows 3.11 removed any hesitation I had in purchasing it.

The three volumes arrived as promised, one per month, over a three month span of time. I purchased the CD-ROM's with my credit card directly from QVision's Web site (www.qvision.net) where they give you the option to use either a secure or normal server for ordering.

## Installation

Each volume of the Workhorse Library comes on a single CD-ROM, shipped in a jewel box with instructions inside the four page front label. Installation is simple, consisting of running the proper setup program for the operating system on which you are installing the program. You tell the installation program where to install the program with the first book you install; all subsequent installations merely ask you to confirm that location.




The program and data files on the hard drive totaled 376KB for all three volumes; most of the text, sound, and graphics are loaded from the CD-ROM during execution. I didn't find an option to load the contents of the CD-ROM to my hard drive, but I can't claim to have made an exhaustive search for one either. Installation to my Cyrix P150 machine running OS/2 Warp 4 FP1 went smoothly, taking no more than a minute or two to complete. However, once installed, I was unable to find any way to change the installation location or the path to the CD-ROM without reinstalling.

## Electronic paperback bookshelf

The Workhorse Library sets up a bookshelf page, from which you can access all of the books you have installed on your computer. As of the end of October, the QVision Web site listed the following books as being available:

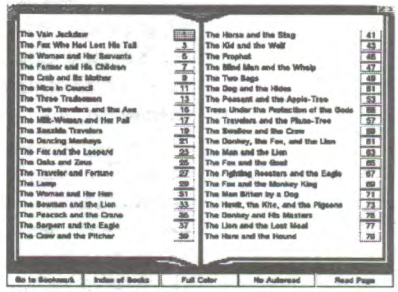
- *Aesop's Fables* Volume 1
- *Aesop's Fables* Volume 2
- *Aesop's Fables* Volume 3
- *The Legend of the Holy Child of Atocha*, by J. Janda
- *Wizard of Oz* text series: all fourteen books, by L. Frank Baum

The following books were expected to ship on the dates noted:

- *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, ships December 97
- *Appointments with the Little King*, by J. Janda, ships December 97
- *The Legend of St. Christopher*, by J. Janda, ships November 97

Global settings for the program are set on two rows of "pushbuttons" on the bookshelf page. They are replaced on the Table of Contents page by a single row of book specific options, such as color resolution or autoreading when the book supports them. Likewise, on the pages of the actual book, the menu row consists of navigation buttons. All of the mouse actions on the pages have keyboard shortcuts which are documented in the CD-ROM front cover.

When you select a book from the bookshelf, the program either prompts you for the CD-ROM, or goes directly to the Table of Contents page if the proper CD-ROM is already loaded. From the Table of Contents page you can either click on what part of the book you wish to go to or you can jump to a bookmark if one was set.




The program itself appears to be bulletproof; nothing I did to it managed to crash it. However, nothing being perfect, I found a couple of things slightly annoying. The first is that you can't copy the text in the book for insertion in other documents; also, you can't cut and paste the artwork, which is undoubtedly copyrighted anyway.

The other problem is that the program window is fixed in size; you can't maximize it, you can't resize it, it simply is the size it is. It can be minimized. I suspect that settling on a fixed window size, which took up about 80% of my 1152x864 resolution screen, simplifies formatting and the display of the artwork.

## The contents

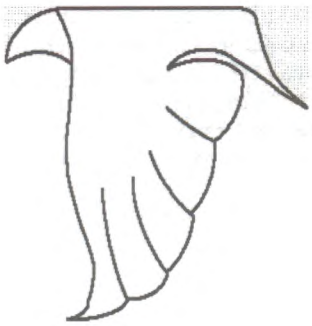
Aesop's Fables uses all the capabilities of the Workhorse Library's electronic book: text, artwork and sound all together.

The original artwork was created by Nicole Welde and consists of full color drawings providing an illustration for each of the fables. The artwork may look amateurish at first, but that is because it appears to have been done in crayon or similar medium. (I'm not an artist so I can't be definite; I just know what it looks like to me.) Looking closer, the artwork is well executed and its crayon-like origins should help children using this program identify more strongly with it.

You can set the program to automatically read the fable aloud when you turn to it. Or, if you prefer, it

Jeff Shultz is an Information Operations Analyst with the 704th Military Intelligence Brigade at Fort Meade, Maryland. He has been using OS/2 since November 1993 with version 2.1 and maintains an OS/2 links Web page at www.netcom.com /~jbshultz. He can be reached at jbshultz@ix.netcom.com.

*[Esther's note: Jeff's a nice boy whom you'd be happy to have as a son-in-law. Do you know any nice girls to set him up with?]*



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**https://secure.falcon-net.net/BMT/RIP/**

can be set to read the page only if requested. The voice reading the fables is female, and pleasant enough (if a little dry). I can't see any child preferring it over his or her mother's voice. However this flexibility makes the program an appropriate form of entertainment for the pre-reading ages, who can listen to the lady read the story while enjoying the artwork. Older children will want to read the fables themselves, while parents will probably prefer to read to their children. The text is in large, bold print and is as readable as any under OS/2.

There are forty fables in each of the three volumes of the Aesop's Fables collection, most of which consist of a page or less of text, with the artwork on the facing page. Volumes two and three also have what is called an Educational Guide, which contains suggestions and guidelines on using these fables to teach reading to "English as a Second Language" students as well as children of varying ages. There is also a nice history of Aesop's life included in this as well.

This is a decent set of books in electronic form, and the Workhorse Library program itself is elegant in its simplicity. I hope that my nephew will like them in a few years. And, since I don't think he'll be able to destroy the CD-ROMs like I expect him to destroy his other toys, I'll hopefully get them back someday in the future for my own children. Meanwhile, I'm looking forward to getting the Wizard of Oz series; for $14.95 plus S&H, it is less expensive than collecting the paperbacks, if you can even find them. Now I just need a computer with a CD-ROM drive that I can use in bed or in, ahem, other rooms of the house.

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*review*

# Sundial's RelishWeb

*by Craig Greenwood*

RelishWeb
Sundial Systems

System Requirements:
OS/2 Warp 3 or later
Relish 2.23 or later
Web Explorer version 1.03 or later
1 MB hard disk space

It certainly was a treat for me to able to attend the first Warpstock. I felt it was a very significant and worthwhile event. I think that several companies had similar expectations of the conference, and took the opportunity to debut some new software releases for the OS/2 community.

One such company was Sundial Systems, and what they unveiled was RelishWeb, a companion to their ever-popular time and information manager, Relish.

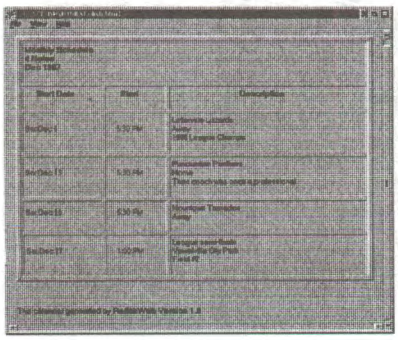
## Info on the Web

While Relish is a very flexible and reliable time and task manager, RelishWeb is an applet that allows the user to create static HTML files based on one's Relish data. Sundial Systems claims that "Anything you can view in Relish can easily be converted into an HTML file by RelishWeb—and that file can then be uploaded to your Web server."

If you are not already familiar with Relish, then you may have trouble understanding the following description of how RelishWeb integrates with it. If that is your case, you may want to check out www.sundialsystems.com and see if you ought to be using Relish.

Consider this scenario; you have a child who is in a soccer league, and you have volunteered to create and maintain a Web page with the team's schedule, as well as the names, addresses and phone numbers of all the team members and coaches. With Relish/RelishWeb this will be a cinch.

Input the team's game schedule into Relish just as you would any other meeting. Make sure you create a group called "Soccer," and assign all the soccer related data to that group. Continue by inputting all the names, addresses, and phone numbers as Phone Book entries assigned to that same group.



Now that you have some data to work with, there are a multitude of ways to get the information into RelishWeb so it can create an HTML table. My favorite way is to use drag-and-drop from Relish onto the opened RelishWeb window. Basically anything that makes sense can be dragged and dropped: a time from the time ruler, a date from the reference calendar, the title bar icon from the reference calendar, the descriptive title of a view, the descriptive title of a Lookup operation, or a Relish Bun from the OS/2 Desktop or Relish Buns folder.

Once this is done, the RelishWeb preview window shows the resulting Web page, with the view you dragged and dropped in the form of an HTML table. If you like what you see, you can save it as a file and upload it to your Web server so it's available to all who know the URL.

## Customizing

The appearance of the selected data in the RelishWeb preview window can be modified, to a degree. For example, before you drag the view to the window, you can select what columns are to be displayed, whether Relish type icons should be used, if a legend of those icons is to be included, etc.

There are several other modifications to the HTML page that I wanted; but RelishWeb doesn't provide a simple interface for those modifications. For example, the title of the page defaults to "RelishWeb 1.0"—a rather meaningless title to most viewers of the page since it has nothing to do with the data being displayed. Also, the table heading takes on the title of the Relish view that was dragged to RelishWeb—again, not particularly meaningful.

One more option I would like is an easy way to specify a different background GIF. While these changes can be made fairly simply by editing the HTML, that would involve an extra step of opening the saved file in a text editor and finding the code to change. For the next release, I would suggest including a menu on the menu bar called something like "HTML," which would include options to change these various HTML elements. Or have a popup window that asks the user to fill in their choices for these three things each time a view is dragged to the RelishWeb window.

I did make a couple of observations that may be useful if you do decide to use RelishWeb. The first is that, in the installation routine's registration window, the License Number field is not case sensitive but the Access Code field is. This threw me off for a moment, causing me to fear that I had been given incorrect registration information, but I eventually figured it out.

The other thing that confused me has to do with dragging a Relish Bun to the RelishWeb window. If you change the group that is viewed in a Bun, and then drag the Bun icon to the RelishWeb window, RelishWeb will not reflect the change unless you close the bun before dragging it to RelishWeb.

## Conclusions

RelishWeb is not fully mature, as the 1.0 version number and my aforementioned suggestions and observations indicate. But these things not withstanding, it is a nifty little applet that does just what the developer intended for it to do.

RelishWeb is available to evaluate for free. If you don't enter a valid license, RelishWeb will operate as a working model with some features disabled, notably only displaying 5 entries. By the time of this printing, I expect it to be available in all the usual sites where OS/2 and Sundial products are sold. If you do download the product, you should be aware that you will need to update Relish or RelishNet to version 2.23 or higher in order for them to be compatible with RelishWeb. Contact Sundial for this free update.

*review*

# MR2/ICE email program

*by Elliot Abramowitz*

Until a few years ago, staying in touch meant using one of two modes of communication. You could use standard postal mail (with its time lag of one to five days, if you're lucky!), or, as AT&T used to say, you could "reach out and touch someone." The telephone generated an instant connection but long distance rates made it a costly one. As a result, with today's Internet mania, the number of people and business using email has skyrocketed.

MR2/ICE is one of 3 stand alone email products that OS/2 users can purchase. The others would be PMMAIL and Post Road Mailer. Warp 4 does ship with two email products: Lotus Notes Mail 4 and UltiMail Lite. UltiMail doesn't give you the breadth and scope of other products available (and some say is a much harder product to use). Lotus Notes on the other hand requires 40 Megs of space for the program and can be difficult to install.

As you can see from the following capture, MR2/ICE provides you with a lot of information on your main screen:

From the main screen, the user has the ability to monitor the status of the mail connection, the amount of new incoming mail (this shows up in red), the amount of messages still left in your in basket and whether or not you have read it (indicated by a check mark) or if you have replied to it indicated by the little icon with the check mark and arrow on it. One of the features that you can access from the main screen is a simple calendar that pops up when called. It may sound silly to you but having that feature has helped out many times when I am corresponding with someone and I need to check if a particular date actually falls on a week day!

From the main screen you have access to all the other folders you have created to catagorize messages that you wish to keep. You can also use various icons that pop up with an explanation of what they do when your mouse is placed over them.

MR2/ICE is almost a snap to install and then customize for your individual taste. I say almost because like the other email products, it uses the values from your Internet dialer as your default values and then lets you customize them to your hearts content. So be sure to have your dialer configured before setting this up. At this point, setting up the program depends on your individual needs and tastes. For example, you can have it check for new incoming mail every 10 minutes or so, just to have some activity on the Internet so your dialer does not time out and disconnect you. I've found this feature handy when I wanted a continuous Internet connection and knew I was going to be away from the computer for a while. Yes, I know that its cheating but sometimes logging back onto your provider once you get connected can be a royal pain.

There are a lot of ways you can customize the program.

MR2/ICE is a very robust program that is a joy to use and behold. Its feature list can be broken down into the following groups:

## Mail protocol

MR2/ICE supports both POP and SMTP. It does not yet support IMAP. However in checking with my service provider, they don't offer it either, nor do they plan to in the near future. As more sites start to offer this, I'm sure that it will be included.

## Multiple Email accounts

MR2/ICE supports multiple email accounts. Each mail account has its own password and settings so that if you are sharing a computer with someone, you can each have your own settings.

## Mail Creation

New messages can be created in a number of ways. The basic way is to use the pull down menu bar to select **New message** (Ctrl+N). From there, you can either enter the name manually or click on the question mark at the end of the line to bring up your address book.

Once you are into the actual message itself, you have the option of using either a spell checker or thesaurus to check the message. You can use the address book to create either single or multiple messages and then send them out.

When the message is finished you have the option of sending it out immediately or waiting for future connection. The program also allows for a message receipt to be generated if it is sent to a fellow MR2/ICE user.

The program allows for carbon copies to be sent. You can also use various templates that you can either create or modify from one of the supplied templates.

One of the neat features is that you can have out going mail copied into a folder so that you can also have a method to check on prior communications.

## Searching

MR/2 allows you to search both the Incoming mail index and mail contents for key words or phases. This is great for quickly finding a message (such as searching for the message giving directions to an upcoming meeting).

## Other features

MR2 has so many features it's hard to just pick out a few, but I'll try:

MR2 includes filters for incoming messages, encryption support, FTP and Web browser launch from within a message, MIME and UUEncode attachments are supported (as well as BINHEX for incoming messages). So far, I haven't found a limit on the number of folders you can create and maintain.

Like any good OS/2 program, REXX support is built in along with bubble hints, progress indicators, and status bars to help keep track of what the program is doing. One neat feature is the way it automatically updates an address if it belongs in an address group and you have to change it. The address is automati-

cally changed in all the affected groups.

### Some of its drawbacks

Like all programs, MR2 does have a few minor drawbacks. If you have multiple mail accounts, it will not automatically check them on schedule. You actually have to be using the account for it to go looking for new mail. I've checked with the author and he is aware of this and hopes to correct it in an upcoming release. As mentioned before, the fact that IMAP isn't yet supported is not that big of a concern, since my Internet provider doesn't offer it either.

The biggest problem facing this program is its lack of online help. While there are various ways to work around this—from email to the author, to checking MR/2's Web based help pages—this lack may be a serious drawback for those who haven't used an email program before. I, for one, would like a bit of hand holding, or at least better explanations of how to use templates and mailing lists. Again, the author is aware of this and hopes to fix the problem in future releases.

### Is it worth it?

If you, like most OS/2 users, are looking for the most bang for the buck, then this program is for you. Unlike many shareware authors, Mr. Knight provides you with a fully functioning program for the trial period. Nothing is crippled! What's more, the price is right; MR2/ICE is priced at a modest $30. When you register, you are added to the author's email listing notifying you of new updates and fixes (which seem to come out on a monthly basis). Additionally, you will be included in a Q & A discussion that goes on in email format so that you can learn more about the ability of your new program and follow along as new bugs and work around are reported.

[*Author's personal note: I'd like to thank the reviews editor for the patience he has shown in getting this review back to him. It's been a hectic time of hard drive crashes and email problems among other things for me. So, thanks again!*]

*press release*

# New clients for PMfax LAN for OS/2

Keller Group, developer of the OS/2 fax software sold as FaxWorks for OS/2 and PMfax, has released a new fax gateway for Lotus Notes/Domino, an enhanced fax gateway for cc:Mail, and enhanced fax workstation client software for Win95 and NT. All of the new products are now shipping and can be used with PMfax LAN version 3.01 and later, including extensive multiline and multi-department versions.

"These new packages demonstrate our ongoing commitment to supporting OS/2 and integrating our fax products into the LAN environment," says Mark Ahlstrom, President of Keller Group. "The new Notes fax gateway and enhanced workstation client for Win95 and NT allow users of all popular LAN systems to use our powerful OS/2-based fax servers, and our Notes gateway is now tightly integrated for Notes address books, outgoing faxing from Notes e-mail, and delivery of incoming faxes via Notes e-mail attachment."

The Notes/cc:Mail Gateway Option ($995) lets users send and receive faxes directly from Lotus Notes and cc:Mail e-mail systems. It now supports both the Notes API and Lotus VIM interface, including the 32-bit versions of Notes and cc:Mail. Notes users can send outbound faxes using Notes address book, external domain or subject line addressing. Address book support means the program can obtain the fax numbers directly from the Notes address books for transparent e-mail faxing. External domain support allows sending of a fax using "faxnumber@Fax" email addresses, while subject line support lets the fax number be in the subject of the e-mail message. Users can also broadcast faxes to distribution groups from both Notes and cc:Mail.

The enhanced Windows workstation client (included in various PMfax LAN configurations starting at $699) provides an interface which is similar to Keller's popular OS/2 workstation client software and allows the PMfax LAN products to support workstations running NT, Win95, Windows 3.1, DOS, and OS/2 through an OS/2 fax server. The OS/2 fax server can be a non-dedicated OS/2 workstation on any popular LAN system.

All PMfax products are now shipping for electronic web orders which are placed directly with Keller Group (`www.kellergroup.com`). PMfax customers who have purchased these PMfax LAN version 3.00 options from Keller Group can get a free upgrade from Keller Group.

# What's new?

Every month, new OS/2 applications are released or updated. This column attempts to let you know what's out there, but we don't presume to offer evaluations. If you're interested in reviewing any of the products listed, contact Craig Greenwood, reviews@possi.org.

## Internet Adventurer 1.20

Internet Adventurer integrates all major Internet protocols into one program. It supports WWW, IRC, News, Email, Java, FTP, and Telnet.

Internet Adventure has been awarded 5 cows by TUCows, the highest possible score. Software Showcase rated Internet Adventurer "excellent."

The newest edition of the EDM/2 online magazine said: "The Internet Adventurer suite of programs is an excellent program which has great potential. The GUI design is clean and direct. The user is never overpowered with too much information even though at times the program has several presentation manager windows opened. . . This program can fulfill the needs of all but the most demanding of Internet users."

Internet Adventurer is shareware, and costs $40 to register. You can register at www.inetadv.net, where you can also download a free demo.

## Nota Musica

Johannes Martin Software-Entwicklung announced the availability of Nota Musica Sequencer for OS/2. As its name suggests, this program is a MIDI sequencer; it enables you to play and record music files on sound cards and musical instruments that are equipped with a MIDI interface. Nota Musica Sequencer supports the new Real-Time-MIDI interface of OS/2 Warp Version 4, which offers high quality and precision music.

"Nota Musica Sequencer is the first program that allows recording of MIDI files under OS/2 using an up-to-date graphical user interface," said project manager Ludger Martin. "Thanks to IBM VoiceType support, you can control recording and playback of music from your musical instrument. Speak to your computer, when recording shall begin!" he explained while playing tunes on a music keyboard. "Once recorded, tunes can be imported into Nota Musica for further editing and to create printouts," added Johannes Martin, company founder.

A MPU401 compatible sound card with wave-table or a MIDI keyboard is recommended.

Nota Musica Sequencer is $27. Further information can be found at www.teamos2.de/software/notamusica/.

## Post Road

InnoVal Systems Solutions announced the availability of Post Road Mailer 3.0 for OS/2 and NetExtra 2.0 for OS/2. In a letter to customers InnoVal's president, Dan Porter, along with the InnoVal OS/2 team, discussed both products.

In commenting on NetExtra 2.0, Porter writes, "This is a major upgrade to what has become a wildly successful and best selling OS/2 product. You can visit any retail software outlet and find several fast-selling browser add-ons for the Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator (for Windows 95), but you won't find any that match the power, features, or usefulness of NetExtra for OS/2.

"NetExtra upgrade prices apply to prior releases of NetExtra, WebExtra, and other native OS/2 browser add-on programs."

Commenting on the Post Road Mailer, he says, "We are particularly proud of this new release because it speaks to our ongoing commitment to quality OS/2 software and the OS/2 user community. With a new tool bar and several other usability enhancements, you won't want to miss out on this new release.

"The upgrade price for the Post Road Mailer applies to you if you have a license for *any* OS/2 email program. OS/2 email programs include Netscape Navigator for OS/2, Ultimail Lite, registered shareware, and all prior releases of the Post Road Mailer.

"By upgrading to the newest release of the Post Road Mailer, you are assured of remaining current with the all the latest improvements. To help you protect your investment in OS/2 software we are offering a $20 discount for the upcoming Post Road Mailer for Java (approximately 40% off). This offer is automatically extended to everyone who upgrades to or orders release 3.0 of the Post Road Mailer. Your release 3.0 license number will be your proof of purchase for the discount."

Upgrades and new user licenses are available from:

- Indelible-Blue, www.indelible-blue.com/ib
- J3 Computing, www.os2store.com
- The OS/2 Supersite, www.os2ss.com
- InnoVal Systems Solution, www.innoval.com

Most resellers offer electronic delivery through the Internet. Street prices for electronic delivery of both products are estimated to be about $25 (upgrade) and $40 (new user). The suggested retail price is $49.95 for the new user license.

For further information and an update on the Post Road Mailer for Java, see www.innoval.com or write to innoval@ibm.net or customer@innoval.com.

## PowerBoot

Power Boot is a utility that allows you to select which operating system to boot from, if you have multiple OS's on your drives.

If all you need is the ability to boot from different partitions, Power Boot is more versatile and much less expensive than another popular program.

Power Boot is an ideal and inexpensive companion to Partition-It or Partition Magic. You can create multiple partitions with Partition-It or Partition Magic, then use Power Boot to boot from any one of the partitions.

If your company uses Partition Magic 3.0 and you don't want to pay

One bad software decision
can ruin your whole day.
Let's face it . When it comes to choosing the right utilities for your OS/2 system, you can't afford to take risks. You need a proven set of disk, file, and desktop utilities which are reliable and effective. One that supports multi-gigabyte partitions, HPFS and FAT file formats, long file names, with both PM and command line utilities. With qualified product support representatives accessible from the internet, compuserve, phone or fax.
What you need is the SofTouch Suite family of OS/2® utilities from SofTouch Systems, Inc. Our disk and file utilities improve system performance with HPFS and FAT defraggers, repair damaged INI files and user desktops, fully uninstall applications, move applications across different partitions and manage hundreds of thousands of files in directories and drives spanning multiple gigabytes of space. Our software repairs damaged partitions, rebuilds corrupted desktops, and recovers critical HPFS data files - everything you need to maintain your custom OS/2 system.
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OS/2
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1995

an exorbitant price for Boot Manager licenses, Power Boot is an excellent alternative. Unlike OS/2 Boot Manager, Power Boot does not occupy a primary partition entry; you can use all four primary partitions in a hard disk for different operating systems.

You can choose which drive letter an OS/2 HPFS partition can be booted with. You can hide or unhide partitions, on the fly, as you boot up. There is no need to run another program in order to hide or unhide partitions.

With a one touch option, you can configure your system to install an OEM version of an operating system (such as Windows 95 OSR2). Often, such OEM versions will not install if they detect another operating system.

Power Boot is Power-Chain enabled. You can install more than one utility in the master boot record of your hard drive.

Power Boot is $25, and is available at BMT Micro.

## ETHMON2

ETHMON2 LAN Analyzer for OS/2 is a Network monitoring program for use with Ethernet Networks. Among its features are:

- Real time monitoring
- Statistics
- Protocol decoding
- Report generator
- Multi-level filtering

More information as well as a demo version (limiting capture to 5-10 packets) is available at www.gsoftnet.com. You can also send email to info@gsoftnet.com.

## PM2Web

PM2Web allows remote control of the OS/2 Presentation Manager desktop from an ordinary Web browser. Because of limitations in the Web browser technology, this remote control is limited in certain ways. This utility is best used for monitoring applications or remote control there keyboard input is not the main part of the application, as keyboard input is rather difficult.

For more regular and convenient remote control, check out the PM2You Remote Control product at www.bmtmicro.com. Registration: $67, available at BMT Micro.

## CapiTel

CapiTel is a 32-bit answering machine for OS/2, Windows 95, and Windows NT. It has graphical and text versions for all operating systems. Among its features are:

- 32-bit multi-threaded answering machine
- OS/2 graphical and text mode versions, based on CAPI 1.1
- Graphical and text mode versions for Windows 95/NT, based on CAPI 2.0
- Complete Support for WAV files
- Remote control functions, controlled by DTMF tones.
- Silence detection
- Completely configurable

Registration: $25, available at BMT Micro.

## MIDI Station

MIDI Station allows you to send MIDI SysEx messages to any MIDI compliant device through your sound card. This is accomplished by using the OS/2 Real Time MIDI subsystem. You create what are called "Pages" that correspond to a particular MIDI device. Inside of a particular "Page" you can have any number of "Controls" which correspond to a particular MIDI message. The maximum number of pages you can create is only limited by the amount of disk space you have. This configuration allows for a logical ordering of your MIDI setup. A sixteen channel mixer is also provided for real-time mixing of volume and left-to-right panning. This program does not receive SysEx messages but only sends them. The reason for this is that currently the RTMIDI subsystem doesn't support receiving system exclusive messages. Hopefully in the future this limitation will be removed.

MIDI Station requires OS/2 Warp 4 with RTMIDI installed (installed by default). You may be able to run this under OS/2 Warp 3 if you have the RTMIDI system installed. Also, you need the MPU-401 driver installed if your sound card driver doesn't directly support RTMIDI; not many do, unfortunately. This is available on the Device Driver CD that comes with OS/2 Warp 4; it is also available from IBM's device driver Web site and various other BBSes and Web sites.

MIDI Station requires OS/2 Warp 4 with the RTMIDI subsystem installed (installed by default). You may be able to run this program under Warp 3 if you have the RTMIDI subsystem configured on your machine. The minimum screen size is at least 800x600 and the minimum color depth is 256. An OS/2 compliant sound card should be present in your system and it should have an MPU-401 interface. Most sound cards have the MPU-401 interface but the SoundBlaster-AWE may not. You will also need the proper interface to connect your sound card to your synthesizer. (Some cards have a joystick port that can be used as a MIDI interface with the proper adapter; check your owner's manual for details.)

Registration: $25, available at BMT Micro.

## PM Make

Probably the most comprehensive PM based make program available, this product performs the core functions of making, backup, and restore, as well as being totally tools independent. PM Make can manage projects spread over directories, split into myriad subdirectories, numerous output files including several .exe, .inf, .hlp etc. in one make. PM Make provides plugin DLL's, push button control of tools options, library selection, selective backup, restore, and more.

PM Make is multithreaded and never gives you a wait pointer. You can safely run multiple instances of PM Make. In conjunction with Program Editor, you can stop on errors and fix bugs on the fly. It has a small memory footprint, and is supplied with full operating instructions, and plugin DLL source.

Registration: $39.90, available at BMT Micro.

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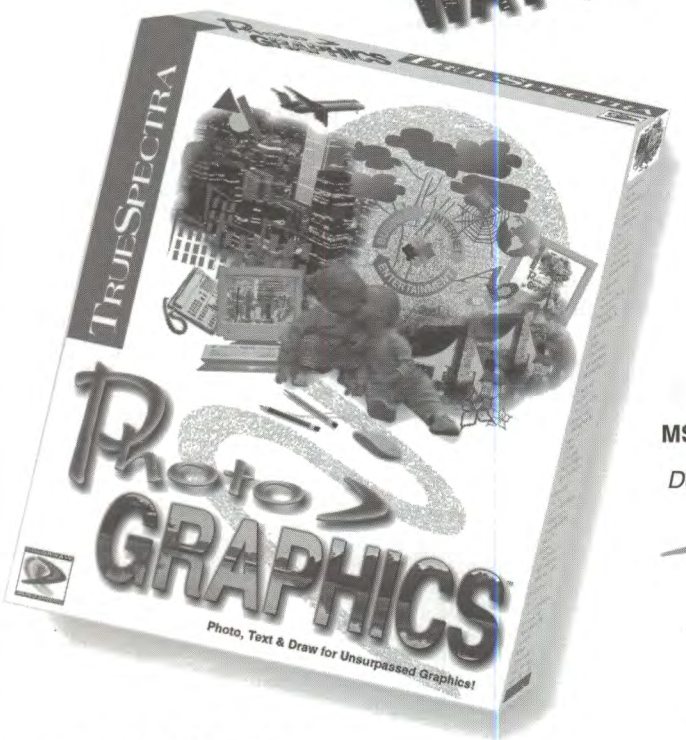


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# The Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc

The Phoenix OS/2 Society is a computer user group dedicated to OS/2. We have been publishing our award-winning magazine, *extended attributes* since August of 1994, and we have members all over the world.

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How useful will it be to join the Phoenix OS/2 Society if you aren't in Arizona? We see the Phoenix OS/2 Society as something akin to the National Geographic Society or the Smithsonian; while most members only see a magazine, you're actually a member of a society, and can participate in its activities when you happen to be in the area.

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